(b) The Government continue to make active efforts to mobilise support for India becoming a permanent member of the UN Security Council. Besides actively participating in the UN debates on Security Council reform, the Government continue to follow up this issue with various countries.

Bilateral talks with Pakistan

20. SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and Pakistan have resumed bilateral talks in the month of October, 2007 and discussed on nuclear CBMS and joint anti-terror mechanism;

(b) if so, the outcome of the talks held; and

(c) to what extent both Governments have taken steps to implement them ?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (c) Yes. The fifth round of India-Pakistan expert-level talks on Nuclear CBMs was held in New Delhi on 19 October, 2007. Discussions focussed on a review of the implementation of existing agreements on CBMs and on disarmament and non-proliferation related issues of mutual interest in multilateral forums as provided for in the Lahore Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) of 1999. The two sides agreed to meet in Islamabad next to carry forward the dialogue and the process of nuclear CBMs.

The second meeting of the Anti-Terrorissm Mechanism was held in New Delhi on 22nd October, 2007. The two sides reviewed the follow up steps taken on the information shared during the first meeting of the Joint Anti Terrorism Mechanism held in Islamabad on 6th March, 2007 and in the intervening period. Both sides shared new information on terrorist incidents including those, which have occurred since the last meeting. They agreed to continue to work to identify measures exchange specific information and assist in investigations.

GSM visa rules of Australia

21. SHRI RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that due to General Skilled Migration (GSM) visa rules in Australia that came into effect from 1st September, 2007, future of thousands of overseas Indian students enrolled in various Australian Universities has become uncertain as they would not be able to get permanent residence on completion of their existing courses;

(b) if so, whether Government have taken up matter with Australia to impress upon them and ensure that new visa rules do not become operative retrospectively;

(c) if so, reaction of Government of Australia in the matter; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) The General Skilled Migration Programme of Australia was reformed w.e.f. September 1,2007. The key change in the rules was that onshore applicants for general skilled migration would be required to demonstrate skilled work experience for the relevant period specified by the migration regulations. Graduates from all countries including India, will be able to apply for temporary work visa for a period stipulated under the rules to gain the relevant work experience, after